

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

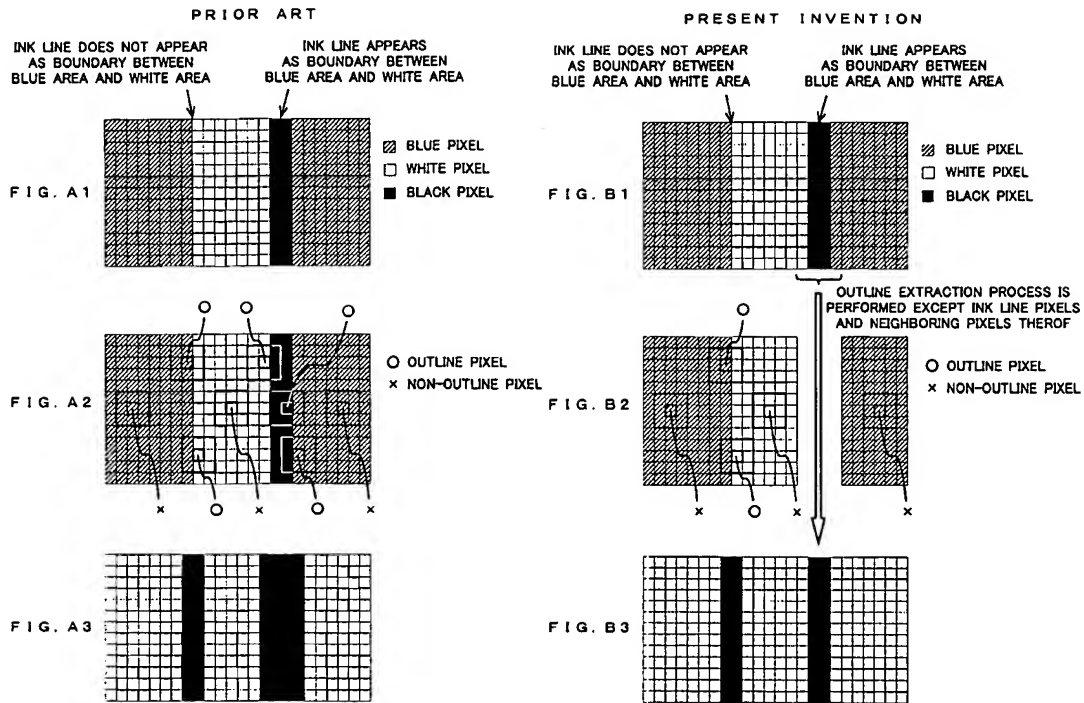
Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Currently, claims 1-19 and 21-32 are pending in this application.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. '175) in view of Bokhour (U.S. '333). Applicant traverses this rejection.

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, all of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. The combination of Suzuki and Bokhour fails to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. For example, the combination fails to teach or suggest “performing an outline extraction process for entire pixels of the original image except the ink line pixels and the neighboring pixels thereof,” as required by independent claim 1. Independent claims 6, 11, 12 and 16 require similar limitations.

In order to facilitate an understanding of the present invention, Applicant has provided below the following figures (FIGS. A1-A3 and FIGS. B1-B3) which graphically describe the present invention and contrasts the present invention (see FIGS. B1-B3) with known “Prior Art” (see FIGS. A1-A3).



An algorithm for determining, when a marked pixel is surrounded by eight pixels including at least one pixel having a color or brightness different from that of the marked pixel, the marked pixel as an outline pixel can be used as one example of an outline extraction process. The outline extraction process may be performed for an image as shown in FIG. A1 or FIG. B1 (i.e., an image containing both an ink line boundary between different colors and a non-ink-line boundary between different colors).

In conventional "Prior Art", pixels indicated by \circ in FIG. A2 are extracted as outline pixels, so that an image shown in FIG. A3 is obtained through the outline extraction process. As can be seen in FIG. A3, the ink line has become thickened.

On the other hand, when the present invention is utilized, an outline extraction process is performed on all of the pixels representing the image except for ink line pixels and neighboring pixels thereof. That is, the ink line pixels and its neighboring pixels are excluded from the outline extraction process. Pixels neighboring the ink line are not extracted as outline pixels, thereby obtaining an image as shown in FIG. B3. The ink line shown in FIG. B3 is therefore not thickened as in (Prior Art) FIG. A3.

Through the present invention, the ink line may always be prevented from becoming thickened regardless of the outline extraction algorithm used. This is because the present invention performs “an outline extraction process for entire pixels of the original image except for the ink line pixels and the neighboring pixels thereof” (see, e.g., claim 1). The combination of Suzuki and Bokhour fails to teach or suggest this claimed feature.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-19 in view of Bokhour and Suzuki be withdrawn.

New Claims:

New claims 21-32 have been added to provide additional protection for the invention. Each of these claims depends from one of independent claims 1, 6, 11, 12 or 16. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that each of these new claims is allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to its respective base claim.

FUJITA
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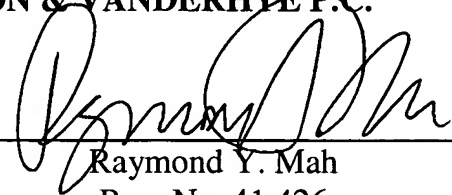
Conclusion:

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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